

Fall 2017 BLHS 107 - THE EARLY MODERN WORLD: SHAKESPEARE, SCIENCE, AND RELIGION (1500-1800)

Thursdays 6:30 – 9:40 PM, 640 Mass Ave., C124,
and Saturdays Sept. 16 and Nov. 4, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM, online using Canvas
Arnold Bradford: bradfora@georgetown.edu, (703) 347-2864, office hours, by appt.
Gibson Cima: gac2@georgetown.edu, office hours: 11 AM – 12 PM, Fridays, NN 320.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this interdisciplinary course, you will discover that in the early modern period (1500-1800), a variety of factors—the European age of exploration and expansion, scientific investigation, Reformation theology, Renaissance Humanism, and the spread of print culture—caused Europeans to redefine themselves and their society. You will explore this process of “modern” redefinition of human values and study how to discuss and write about the changes in intellectual and cultural life it occasioned. You will encounter the terms “Reformation” and “Catholic Reformation,” and study the scientific revolutions of the seventeenth century. William Shakespeare’s plays will enable you to address compelling questions about the interwoven themes of “The Human & the Divine” and “Identity & Difference.” As you study the scientific, religious, and artistic debates of the Early Modern era, you will practice writing and speaking critically about them, using evidence from the text, research, and sound reasoning.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To define, understand, and critique the “Early Modern” era.
2. To analyze the development of religion and science the Early Modern period, including major theological controversies, the effect of religion on society, the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, as well as the Early Modern view of the cosmos and its impact on the Early Modern era.
3. To explore concepts of “the human” and “the divine” as well as “identity” and “difference” in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and *The Merchant of Venice*.
4. To develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Cohen, I. Bernard. *The Birth of a New Physics*. Rev. ed. Norton, 1991.
ISBN: 978-0393300451. Paper.

Hooke, Robert. *Micrographia*. BiblioBazaar, 2008. ISBN: 978-1426486760. Paper.
Janz, Denis, and Jordon, Shirley, eds. *A Reformation Reader*. Fortress
Press, 2008. ISBN: 978-0800663100.

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. Revised Edition. Ed. Roma Gill. Oxford School
Shakespeare Series. USA: Oxford University Press, 2002. ISBN-10-0198320493
_____. *The Merchant of Venice*. Ed. Roma Gill. Oxford School Shakespeare
Series. USA: Oxford University Press, 2006. ISBN-10-019832152X

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Participation: Attend class fully prepared, having read all the material on the docket for that day, with all assignments completed, and ready to engage with the work of the class. Laptop usage is acceptable as a means of note-taking but not as a means of engaging in any other activity. iPhones and other devices must be turned off and stowed, out of sight and out of hand, during class meetings. You are expected to critique your peers' work with respect and honesty.

Attendance: Two late arrivals/early departures of more than seven minutes constitute one unexcused absence. Two unexcused absences will result in a drop of one grade level in your final grade (e.g., dropping a B+ to a C+). Three unexcused absences will result in a failing grade. Discussions of assignments and requirements for projects will not be repeated for absentees. If you are absent on the day you are scheduled to present, you will receive a zero. Excused absences will be given only in rare circumstances and only if student and instructor discuss and arrange the absence in advance.

Submitting Assignments: Please turn in all writings electronically on Canvas and to the professor who assigned the essay at the email addresses listed at the top of the syllabus. Emails to other addresses will not be acknowledged or accepted. Essays must arrive in the incoming email box at or before 6:35 PM on the assigned due date. No late work will be accepted. Extension of time to finish coursework beyond the end of the semester will be granted only in unusual and clear documented situations. Extensions must be mutually agreed upon between student and instructor no later than the last class meeting. All such agreements must be approved by the Associate Dean. Work not received by the Incomplete deadline will result in failure of the class.

Grades: Final grades average the Shakespeare and Science and Religion units.

Shakespeare Unit:

Participation	15%	A – 95 – 4.0	C+ – 78 – 2.33
<i>Hamlet</i> paper	40%	A- – 92 – 3.67	C – 75 – 2.0
<i>Merchant</i> paper	40%	B+ – 88 – 3.3	C- – 72 – 1.67
Introductory paper	5%	B – 85 – 3.0	D – 65 – 1.0

Science and Religion Unit:

Two short essays	50%	B- – 82 – 2.67	F – 64-0 – 0
Virtual museum	25%		
Final canvas post	25%		

- A – Student displays excellent command and exploration of ideas and concepts, exemplary writing skills, and/or is generally focused and well-organized.
- B – Student demonstrates competent exploration of ideas and concepts, average writing skills, and/or is adequately-organized.
- C – Student shows weaknesses in exploring ideas and concepts, writing skills, and/or organization.
- D – Student has serious deficiencies in understanding ideas and concepts, writing, and/or organization.

GEORGETOWN POLICIES:

Academic Integrity: <https://scs.georgetown.edu/resources-current-students/academic-resources/honor-code/>

Georgetown honor pledge: *In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

BLHS 107 policy is that any form of Academic Dishonesty results in failing the course.

See also: Lipson, Charles. *Doing Honest Work in College*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2004.

Sexual Harassment: <https://scs.georgetown.edu/resources-current-students/sexual-misconduct-title-ix/>

Georgetown expects that all members of the University community – students, faculty, staff, and friends – should be able to pursue their work and education in a safe environment, free from sexual coercion, violence, or intimidation. The University is committed to fostering a safe campus environment where sexual misconduct and violence are unacceptable, and where survivors or those who believe they were harmed by another person are provided support and avenues of redress as appropriate. All members of the Georgetown community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others. We encourage all members of our campus community to seek support for and report all sexual harassment and sexual misconduct directly to [Campus Safety & Security](#) or the [Title IX Coordinator](#). These individuals will assist in eliminating the misconduct, preventing its recurrence and addressing the effects.

ADA: <https://scs.georgetown.edu/resources-current-students/disability-services/>

I encourage students with documented disabilities, including invisible disabilities such as chronic illness, learning disabilities, and psychiatric disabilities, to discuss appropriate accommodations with me. You will also need to provide documentation of your disability to the Academic Resource Center, (202) 784-7366 or arc@georgetown.edu. Please do so at the beginning of the semester; accommodations are not retroactive.

Religious Observance: https://campusministry.georgetown.edu/religious_holy_days

Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a givenday because of the observance of a major religious holiday (see below) or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes.

Extreme weather, Emergencies, and Instructional Continuity: During inclement weather or other emergencies on a day when we are scheduled to meet face-to-face, check the university's Web site or call (202) 687-7669 for information on whether the university is open. If the university is open, this class will meet. If the university is closed, this class will meet through distance means such as online videoconferencing; check your e-mail for a message from me on how we will proceed in that situation. Due dates for written assignments submitted through Canvas will not be changed due to campus closings. The university recently has acquired the capability to send text messages and recorded messages about emergencies to cell phones and other mobile devices. Sign up on MyAccess.

Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/>

The Writing Laboratory offers one-on-one instruction in composition, including organization, coherence, grammar, and style. Students may enroll in courses or sign up for appointments as needed. Students work with an instructor on some part of the writing process, such as brainstorming, organizing, revising, or copyediting.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Arnold Bradford (AB) and Gibson Cima (GC)

Week 1 Thurs. 8/31: INTRODUCTION TO THE EARLY MODERN WORLD (AB & GC)

Introductory in-class writing exercise.

Week 2 Thurs. 9/7: REFORMATION, PART I: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THEOLOGY, POLITICS, ECONOMICS (AB)

Janz, Chapter 2 [Luther], introduction and pages 88-146; pages 56-59, 63-74.
Reformation short essay assigned.

DUE: Introductory writing revised.

Week 3 Thurs. 9/14: REFORMATION, PART II: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THEOLOGY, SIN, AND COMMUNITY (AB)

Janz, Chapter 5 [Calvin], introduction and pages 270-328.

DUE: Reformation short essay draft in hard copy form, 2 copies. Will be graded; grade will count for 1/3 of entire essay grade.

Sat. 9/16: REFORMATION, PART III: REFORMATION IN ENGLAND; CHRISTIANITY AND JUDAISM (AB)

Jantz, Chapter 6 [English Reformation]: pages 329-376; page 436.

Week 4 Thurs. 9/21: SHAKESPEARE: *HAMLET*, THE HUMAN & THE DIVINE (GC)

Read Acts I-III of *Hamlet* after studying the Introduction, Background, and William Shakespeare sections of your text. Use the *Hamlet* Reading Guide posted on Blackboard.

DUE: Reformation short essay.

Week 5 Thurs. 9/28: SHAKESPEARE: *HAMLET*, THE HUMAN & THE DIVINE (GC)

Finish reading *Hamlet*, Acts IV and V.

DUE: a one-page analysis of a brief passage from the play that frames the tension between the “human” and the “divine.” See Canvas for the complete version of this two-part *Hamlet* Paper Assignment.

Week 6 Thurs. 10/5: SHAKESPEARE: *HAMLET*, THE HUMAN & THE DIVINE (GC)

Watch a version of *Hamlet* on YouTube or other media.

DUE: 4 pp. *Hamlet* paper. See Canvas for the complete version of this two-part *Hamlet* Paper Assignment.

Week 7 Thurs. 10/12: SHAKESPEARE: *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE*; IDENTITY & DIFFERENCE WITHIN RELIGION (GC)

Read the selections from James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (posted on Canvas). Watch a version of *The Merchant of Venice* on YouTube or other media.

Week 8 Thurs. 10/19: VIRTUAL MUSEUM VISIT (AB)

Individual online work, no classroom meeting.
Virtual museum visit includes Science, Reformation, Shakespearean interests.
Specific assignment posted on Canvas.

**Week 9 Thurs. 10/26: THE RISE OF SCIENCE, PART I: MACROCOSM:
COPERNICUS AND GALILEO (AB)**

Cohen, pp. 3-80. Study questions posted on Canvas.
Science short essay assigned.

**Week 10 Thurs. 11/2: THE RISE OF SCIENCE, PART II: MACROCOSM: GALILEO
AND KEPLER (AB)**

Cohen 81- 147. Study questions posted on Canvas.
DUE: Draft of science short essay due in hard copy form, 2 copies. Will be
graded; grade will count for 1/3 of entire essay grade.

**Sat. 11/4: THE RISE OF SCIENCE, PART III: MICROCOSM: NEWTON AND
THE INVISIBLE UNIVERSE (AB)**

Cohen, pp. 148-184; Hooke. Study questions posted on Canvas.
DUE: Science short essay.

**Week 11 Thurs. 11/9: RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND THE ARTS IN THE EARLY
MODERN WORLD (AB)**

Study assignment posted on Canvas.
DUE : Virtual Museum Visit report.

**Week 12 Thurs. 11/16: SHAKESPEARE: *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE*; IDENTITY &
DIFFERENCE WITHIN RELIGION (GC)**

Read *The Merchant of Venice*, Acts I-III, using the Reading Guide.
Begin working on your 4-pp. *Merchant* paper.
See Canvas for this *Merchant* Paper Assignment.

**Week 13 Thurs. 11/30: SHAKESPEARE: *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE*; IDENTITY &
DIFFERENCE WITHIN RELIGION (GC)**

Read *The Merchant of Venice*, Acts IV-V, using the Reading Guide.

**Week 14 Thurs. 12/7: ORAL PRESENTATIONS ON SHAKESPEARE AND
SCIENCE/RELIGION (AB & GC)**

Individual or Group reports on the most significant shift in perspective in the Early
Modern World. See Canvas for details.
DUE: 4 pp. *Merchant of Venice* essay.

Week 15 Thurs. 12/14, 7:00 PM: FINAL POSTING (CANVAS)

Assignment TBA on Canvas.